

Tips from the Field on Financial Sustainability

- It always helps to network, to keep informed about what's going on, and to develop connections with others.
- It helps to have someone in your organization who will take on the task of scouting and tracking those opportunities that might be available to you.
- If you can possibly afford it, you might consider hiring someone to do the work of writing grants for you. This can be worth the expense if your grant-writer is good, and especially if he or she is willing to work at least partly on commission. One next best alternative: find a sympathetic local professional with background both in grant-writing and in your content area to review your proposal for form and content; follow his or her advice.
- You can often find some other like-minded tax-exempt group or organization to make a formal grant application for you, if tax-exemption is needed and you are not tax-exempt yourself. That same group, often called a lead agency, may also manage grant funds received. More information on this can be found in [Chapter 43, Section 4: *Understanding Tax-Exemption and Nonprofit Status*](#). If you do enter a similar arrangement, be sure and work out the relationship beforehand. Everyone's roles and responsibilities should be made very clear, as should what advantages both groups will receive from the arrangement.
- Successful fund-raising also depends upon your being in the right place at the right time, over and above the actual merits of your proposal. And funding deadlines are often short. These are even more reasons to stay connected with possible funding sources, and to have ideas and action plans developed so that you can be ready to move quickly when the right opportunity comes your way.
- Get to know your local politicians (legislators) well enough so that they return your calls, and make sure that they and other politicians understand your issue and its importance.
- Diversify your funding, so you aren't completely dependent on any one form of support.
- Continuity is important. Stick to your mission, keep doing what you're doing. It's helpful to have consistent people, consistently going out doing the same consistent thing. People know what you're all about, and it helps create the local base of support discussed in the last bullet point.

Source: Community Tool Box. For more information, go to the Community Toolbox at <http://ctb.ku.edu>